

**To:** Coleman, Sam[Coleman.Sam@epa.gov]; Card, Joan[Card.Joan@epa.gov]  
**From:** Strauss, Alexis  
**Sent:** Tue 8/11/2015 4:35:28 PM  
**Subject:** Region 9 update - GKM Response 8/11/15

You are both busy and I'll not send you these daily R9 updates unless you ask. We will today set up a Navajo Nation –specific phone number for well sampling, per note below. Please take good care of yourself(ves) during these demanding times.

- Region 9 continues to be in close communication with the Navajo Nation and is coordinating with them on various efforts including sampling and community outreach.
- By mid-week, Region 9 expects to have 15 staff and contractors on site to handle emergency response, water sampling and communications/coordination with the Navajo Nation and other stakeholders.
- Additionally, Region 9 is holding daily calls with the Navajo Nation, sending Navajo National representatives daily updates via email, and Region 9 is working with the wider regional response to set up an 800 number for Navajo Nation and other citizens who are seeking to have their water tested.
- Region 9 Administrator Jared Blumenfeld plans to visit the area Thursday, going to Farmington, Shiprock and Durango

### **EPA Region 9 Activities – 8/11/15**

- Navajo officials reacted days prior to any observed impact of the Gold King Mine release on the Navajo Nation, assessing their well fields and drinking and irrigation water intake systems and issuing a precautionary "do not use" public service announcement regarding water from potentially impacted sources. On 8/8, the President of the Navajo Nation declared a State of Emergency for the San Juan River valley. Region 9 held a coordination meeting with Navajo Nation EPA (NNEPA) and Navajo Department of Public Safety. Region 9 has deployed an On Scene Coordinator (OSC) to the Durango Incident Command Post to coordinate Region 9 activities with an EPA

Area Command in Region 8. The Region has also deployed a Public Information Officer (PIO) to participate in a Joint Information Center (JIC), presently in Durango, and with other the affected Federal, State, County and Tribal agencies. Region 9 deployed an OSC to the Farmington Incident Command Post (ICP) today to coordinate field activities and stakeholder requests for assistance. **The ICP is co-located with EPA Incident Commanders from Region 6 (Dallas, TX office).**

- **The Navajo EPA surface water monitoring program (Shiprock Office) collected water and sediment samples from the San Juan River - prior to the spill impact and have since established 8 fixed monitoring stations to be sampled daily. The stations stretch along the San Juan between Shiprock, NM and Mexican Hat, UT. Region 9 has provided 6 START contractors to coordinate and conduct increased sample collection and lab analysis in conjunction with NNEPA.**

- On 8/10, contractors tried to pinpoint the leading edge of the waste water discharge plume near Hogback, NM. Though not clearly visible as before, contractors conducted conductivity monitoring and collected samples from the area in an attempt to identify downstream impacts. Also, coordination calls on 8/10 with Federal agencies, State of AZ, Coconino County and City of Page officials and Congressional representatives suggested the need for sampling even further downstream in the Glen Canyon, Lake Powell and Coconino County segments of the San Juan River. EPA has begun to coordinate efforts with those of the Bureau of Reclamation and US Geological Survey to share information.

- **NNEPA also requested drinking water sampling support immediately for Navajo operated water intakes. A USEPA drinking water expert has deployed and is working with NNEPA to inventory and assess water sources including private wells and intakes. USEPA will establish and provide a 1-800 telephone for private citizens and entities to request well water sampling.**

- Region 9 has hired a contractor to coordinate with Navajo Tribal Utilities Authority (NTUA) to deliver water to the areas impacted by the discharge. The Montezuma Creek well development area was closed as a precaution prior to any impact. EPA contractors are collecting NTUA provided water from the Sweetwater wellfield and delivering it to the Montezuma Creek service area.

• Two Community Involvement Coordinators (CICs) arrived in Farmington Sunday. CICs met with Navajo Incident Command in Shiprock Sunday evening for an update on outreach activities to date. It was reported that by the end of 8/10, approximately 75% of Navajo communities along San Juan River had been reached by Navajo teams. Community Health Representatives from Navajo are working to finish outreach to remaining communities. On 8/10, CICs attended two special chapter meetings arranged by Vice President Jonathan Nez and provided an update on EPA activity to date. At both chapter meetings, held at Aneth and Oljato, Vice President Nez participated, along with Attorney General Ethel Branch and local chapter officials. Present at the Oljato meeting were NNEPA Executive Director Dr. Donald Ben and special advisor to President Begaye Peterson Zah. The CICs will partner with various Navajo officials, Navajo incident command, and other responding agencies to ensure comprehensive outreach to all affected Navajo Chapters.